

## **Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee Meeting**

July 20, 2017 at 3:30 pm

Boston Store Visitor Center, Peninsula, OH

### **MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Greiser at 3:31 pm

Present: Alison Ball, Jill Bartolotta (for Scott Hardy,) Meiring Borchers, Kathleen Bradley, Ellen Brown-Armstrong, Kate Chapel (for H. Stark,) Tom Denbow, Grace Gallucci, Jane Goodman, Joe Gregory, Jennifer Grieser, Pat Gsellman, Joe Hadley, Bill Hughes, Leila Jackson, Elaine Marsh, Rebecca McCleary, Claire Posius, Howard Simon, Bryan Stubbs, Jacquelyn Zevenbergen, Ted Conlin, Bryan Hinterberger, Lisa Petit

Absent: Amy Brennan, Frank Greenland, Jane Howington, Jan Rybka, Anthony Togliatti, Jo Ann Banda, Russell Brandenburg, Bob Hollis, Laura Deyoung Minnig

Staff: Nichole Vorisek

Guests: Peter Bode, Jennie Brancho, Robert Brand, Rob Curtis, Chris Davis, Pam Davis, Heather Elmer, Katie Evans, Alex Ford, Elizabeth Neudeck

### **Approval of Minutes of April 19, 2017**

Jacki Zevenbergen moved to approve the minutes, Meiring seconded. Minutes were approved.

### **Public Comment**

No public comments

Chairwoman Grieser led a moment of silence for Phil Hillman, some members commented on his contributions, his longtime service on the RAP/AOC, and his loss. Ms. Goodman mentioned that former Congressman Ralph Regula, whose efforts led to the creation of the CVNP, had also passed away and that it was fitting that we were meeting in the Ralph Regula Conference Room.

### **Presentation**

Ted Conlin- Proposal to Remove Two Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) from the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (AOC). This presentation was given June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the public hearing. There were no comments made at or after the presentation, though comments can be made until July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Degradation of Aesthetics is the first BUI up for removal, which is a federally-recognized BUI. The current listing guideline talks about persistent problems of oil sheens, sludge deposits, scum and other objectionable materials and materials that produce color, odor or other nuisances. The AOC committee named the main stem from the George Dam to the head of the navigation channel as partially impaired, the federal navigational channel impaired, and the nearshore area as periodically impaired. Removal criteria states that the BUI can be removed when there are no longer persistent observed ongoing occurrences of sludge deposits, oil sheens, scum and other objectionable materials; specifically, materials that produce color, odor or other nuisances. There are situations that, if applicable, do not constitute an impaired listing: If the cause of the aesthetic problem is from CSOs that are being addressed under an approved long-term control plan or other legally-binding document, then this BUI may be considered restored. If there are observed ongoing occurrences due to storm water runoff and most of the area is covered by an MS4 then the BUI can be listed as restored. Lastly, natural physical features such as woody debris, logjams and excessive turbidity after a rainfall are not considered an

impairment for this BUI. In the 2001 State of the River report the AOC Committee determined that there was no longer a persistent problem and that things were improving. The AOC Committee has determined we have met the targets, and a public survey was conducted which determined the public has seen improvements in the last 3-5 years. Suspended solids in the river have been in decline consistently since the start of the AOC both upstream and in the navigation channel. Litter control is being improved due to the Port Authority's Flotsam and Jetsam boats and the CSO long term control plan requirements. Spills are not seen as a persistent problem anymore and reports of oil sheens have been in decline.

Ms. Grieser asked for a motion to approve the request to remove BUI 11, Degradation of Aesthetics.

Ms. Marsh suggested that we put the telephone numbers where you can contact people for CSOs or oil slicks on the website, and what you can do about it. P. Gsellman moved to approve, B. Stubbs seconded, approved unanimously.

Mr. Conlin continued with the second BUI, 10b, Public Access. This is a local BUI only, and only for the federal navigational channel and the Lake Erie shoreline. The original AOC committee that determined this was an impairment stated that recovery would be measured in acres and feet of public access, but they never stated how many acres or how many feet. In the federal navigational channel, several parks have been created since 1991 and have provided almost 4,000 feet and almost 40 acres of riverfront access. In the lakeshore area several parks were created or improved and have provided 9,000 feet and almost 118 acres of public access in addition to extra bikeways that have been created around the water resource as well as public trails.

July 28<sup>th</sup> 2017 is the end of the comment period for BUI removal actions. Responses will be made to any comments received. Currently two comments have been received. Packets will be assembled and submitted to GLNPO, including the OhioEPA director's cover letter, the written request documents, the AOC Committee's support letters, copies or proof of the OhioEPA public notice, public meeting sign in sheets and comments received. OhioEPA and GLNPO hope that the requests can be approved by the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30.). Ms. Goodman noted that it would be good to have them done by CRR's October 20 State of the River symposium and award ceremony for Jim White. Conlin thought that would be possible.

Joe Hadley moved to approve the letter of support / request for removal for BUI 10b, Leila Jackson seconded, motion approved unanimously.

### **Old Business**

Evaluation of Cuyahoga AOC Boundary: We don't have anything to move forward on today, this was just to acknowledge that we are still having this conversation. Peter put out a draft of revised boundary. The next step on this item is for the strategic implementation subcommittee to review Peter's work and then hopefully at our next meeting they will come with their recommendations on how to proceed.

### **Subcommittee Updates**

*Governance*, Bryan Stubbs-

In terms of attendance, a reminder letter was sent out, expressing that attendance is important and this work is important, and expressing the direction that, if you are not able to attend due to scheduling, send representatives, and if this something that no longer interests you please let us know that you want to be taken off so someone else can come on. A governance meeting needs to be scheduled after the summer turns, and we need to start the process of membership applications, review of terms, board

makeup, and recommendations for re-nominations. Before the end of the year he would like a review of the current code of regulations.

*Public Outreach*, Becky McCleary -

Workshop- Wet, Wild, WOW went very well, Pat Gsellman attended. They met at 3 locations, there were 22-24 teachers each day for the 3 days. On the first day with ODNR there was an opportunity to talk about the AOC and pass out the brochures, and also at the June 27<sup>th</sup> update meeting at the natatorium for the Gorge Dam. Bill Zawiski did a great job presenting to well over 100 people, maybe 120-130 people. Davey Resource Group provided refreshments. Ms. McCleary thanked Ellen Brown-Armstrong and Howard Simon for their help. The next Outreach Committee meeting is August 23 at Notre Dame College thanks to Scott Hardy. Howard is working on some programs and Jane will work with him to develop some talking points. As for the timeline for the video Ted is working on, EPA can't run contracts over the state fiscal year which ended June 30<sup>th</sup> so it must go through approval again. Jacki Zevenbergen reported that they had exhibits at Blue Heron Homecoming and an event in Walton Hills, and if there is any additional literature or brochures please give to her to hand out at events. Pat Gsellman mentioned that he'd had fun interacting with teachers, and encouraged the committee to do the program again. Jane Goodman thanked Becky for keeping all of the Public Outreach programs together.

Chris Davis gave an update on the progress of the new visitor center coming to Cuyahoga Valley National Park in 2019, and the emphasis it will have, and CVNP messaging in general is beginning to have, on the river and its history. The park conservancy has been raising money and the building will have more outdoor spaces and concentrate on educational pieces about the Cuyahoga River. Now the park has an Army Corps of Engineers person stationed at the park, and the Buffalo District is here doing sediment transport studies. The old Station Road stormwater discharge pipe from Brecksville is proposed to have a bioretention project in partnership with the City of Brecksville and Cleveland Metroparks to divert that water, so it will no longer be a point source going into the Cuyahoga River. They have planning money for that project and construction money lined up. They are working with The Nature Conservancy on a Stanford Run project (a Cuyahoga River tributary,) and there is also money to have the Nature Conservancy do a restoration plan. The focus will be the National Park boundaries but the way the agreement is written could cover the whole Cuyahoga River watershed. They are meeting with the Port Authority to put a second bedload interceptor in the river in the park. They are also looking at the number of roads in the park, some of which are redundant. Summit County engineers are looking at the Everett area to remove some roads.

Ms. Grieser mentioned that CVNP is not included in the management action list because the thinking is they will find the means and methods to implement those projects without taking them to GLNPO. It is good to hear the updates and progress of projects.

*Strategic Implementation* - Frank Greenland was called into another meeting at the last minute so was unable to do his presentation. Meiring Borchers gave an update on his behalf.

Jo Ann Banda sent an update regarding the USFWS grant to do sampling in the Cuyahoga River, and EnviroScience was chosen as the contractor. JoAnn, Meiring, and Bill Zawiski met with Paul Anderson from EnviroScience about a month ago. They broke down the areas that they will be sampling and they finished the workplan, which is now being reviewed by OhioEPA. EnviroScience was to start sampling the week of July 10<sup>th</sup> 2017, but due to rain it was rescheduled.

Ms. Grieser thanked Jo Ann Banda and U.S. Fish and Wildlife for providing the funding to do this. A couple of years ago data gaps were supposed to be filled and funding was used instead for the Gorge

Dam. Recently Ms. Banda called and said they had some extra GLRI money made available, so Ms. Grieser went to the management action list, and Ted also gave recommendations. They were able to recommend the Valley View Summit Metropark site and Rob Curtis was able to write a proposal very quickly.

### **CRR/OEPA Subgrant Update**

*Cuyahoga River Restoration*, Jane Goodman-

There have been meetings over the years about removing sediment from the old river channel, which involves Great Lakes Towing and 2 marinas. The docks of the Yacht Clubs will have to be dug out around. The Cleveland Port Authority is blaming the city and the city is ill-equipped to be working on this. Jim White's last day is today so the institutional knowledge about this is leaving. CRR is trying to keep this moving forward. Ted Conlin reported that Mark Loomis called, saying that USEPA has received more than 40 proposals for Legacy Act funding.

Ms. Goodman reported that CRR just finished the first quarter of the new subgrant. Nichole has been out with AOC information. We finished the DepaveNEO program and there are now 40+ project managers. Jane will be speaking at the WMAO conference in November as part of the OEEF grant. The Army Corp of Engineers did a tour to show off lakefront habitats. CRR finished the invasive weeds GLRI grant and now we have brochures to hand out, which educate people on the top 10 most unwanted invasive plants, how to identify them early, how to report and control them. The CWMA partnership includes Cleveland Metroparks, CVNP, ONDR, Geauga and Portage park districts, Summit Metroparks, Tinker's Creek, and The Nature Conservancy. We just got a new US Forest Service grant. Nichole and Carolyn Krause will be out making maps and getting information on invasive plant pathways into park properties. There will be a map of invasion pathways once the work is complete that will be available to the tributary groups.

Nichole made an impervious pavement display to show at EarthFest. Scott Hardy was at Blossom doing plastics prevention promotion at the Jack Johnson concert, with AOC information. Jane did a press conference with National Wildlife Federation on the river's rebirthday and the need for continued support for GLRI funding, that got a lot of press coverage. For the National League of Cities leadership conference, she led, and NPI paid for, a tour on the Holiday for 30-40 people from all around the country to show off the water and they were amazed by the river. RiverDay was May 20<sup>th</sup>, there were 29 activities, almost double from the previous year. Art on the River was new this year and the new river mile signs, designed by local artists, are now posted thanks to EnviroScience. The Behind the Bulkhead project with CUDC is moving ahead. We are meeting to get fish habitat into the conceptual design for the Irishtown bend project. The Enews letter mailing list has gone up to 1,777 with 23% opened. The Facebook page following has increased by 10% with an average of 4 shares per day. The Twitter feed has 403 followers and Instagram has 63 followers. We are working on the annual report and the project cards and short videos. We are continuing work on the Safety Task Force and Doan Brook partnership. We just put in a grant request for some trees at Tinkers Creek, either planting 75 trees or giving away 150 trees. The Lake Erie protection Fund grant is allowing us to compile a list of DepaveNEO sites.

The 2017 CRR State of the River Symposium is scheduled for Friday, October 20.

Rob Curtis reported that the Valleyview Summit Metropark project has a 200 acre of golf course, and they're seeking funding to repair and restore the 3500 linear feet of the river. There is planning underway for a big volunteer event October 27 & 28 to reforest the majority of the site, planting acorns and seeds.

Claire Posius reported that next Tuesday and Wednesday there is a technical workshop for ravine property owners. The focus is restoring ravine, and this is a pilot to see if it's successful with certain residents at Euclid Creek and in Cleveland Heights. The goals are to give these residents guidance on what to do if their slopes start failing, and offer different techniques suitable for ravines instead of flat land. There will be another one in August. Slope stabilization is the main goal.

Jill Bartolotta, OSU Sea Grant, reported that she has been working with 2 researchers, one doing sunscreen research for freshwater, and is looking for freshwater sampling sites. Another researcher is studying skin care and pharmaceuticals impacts, and she is looking for letters of support. Her focus is barriers to properly disposing of pharmaceuticals and trying to find good places to dispose of them. Ms. Grieser asked for a copy of the project proposal to share with organizations for letters of support.

**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE FOR OCTOBER MEETING: The last meeting of the year is October 10, 2017, from 8:30am-10:00am.** Scott Hardy will be the host at Regina Hall at Notre Dame College. There will be an optional restoration tour at Acacia after the meeting. The change is due to a conflict with the Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Conference in Buffalo 10/16-19.

Kathleen Bradley moved to adjourn the meeting, Bill Hughes seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm.